

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of the claims will replace all other versions and listings of the claims.

In the Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for stirring a liquid sample containing an analyte and a reagent, said method comprising the steps of:

(A) providing a cell comprising: a liquid sample retaining section having a plurality of particles with a surface covered with said reagent, and a liquid sample supply inlet, and supplying a liquid sample containing an analyte from said liquid sample supply inlet to said liquid sample retaining section; and

(B) stirring said liquid sample and said reagent by the movement of said particles caused by the flow of said liquid sample in said liquid sample retaining section resulting from the supply of said liquid sample, to separate said reagent from the surface of the particles and to obtain a liquid mixture containing said liquid sample, said reagent, which is dissolved in the liquid sample and said particles,

wherein said reagent includes a specific binding substance capable of specifically binding with an analyte in said liquid sample, and

an electric charge of the surface of said particles and an electric charge of said specific binding substance have ~~a same~~ a positive polarity in said liquid mixture,

wherein, the method further comprises the following step between step (A) and step (B):
a step of adjusting pH in said liquid mixture to be a pH of less than the isoelectric point
pI of the reagent.

Claims 2-3. (Cancelled)

4. (Original) The stirring method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the flow of said liquid sample in said step (B) is a flow circulating along the inner face of the wall of said liquid sample retaining section.

5 -15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously presented) The stirring method in accordance with claim 1, wherein said reagent is an antibody.

17. (Currently amended) The stirring method in accordance with claim 1, wherein each surface of said plurality of particles comprises polylysine amino groups.

18. (Currently amended) The stirring method in accordance with claim 16, wherein each surface of said plurality of particles comprises polylysine amino groups.

19. (New) The stirring method in accordance with claim 17, wherein each surface of said plurality of particles comprises polysine.

20. (New) The stirring method in accordance with claim 18, wherein each surface of said plurality of particles comprises polylysine.

21. (New) A method for stirring a liquid sample containing an analyte and a reagent, said method comprising the steps of:

(A) providing a cell comprising: a liquid sample retaining section having a plurality of particles with a surface covered with said reagent, and a liquid sample supply inlet, and

supplying a liquid sample containing an analyte from said liquid sample supply inlet to said liquid sample retaining section; and

(B) stirring said liquid sample and said reagent by the movement of said particles caused by the flow of said liquid sample in said liquid sample retaining section resulting from the supply of said liquid sample, to separate said reagent from the surface of the particles and to obtain a liquid mixture containing said liquid sample, said reagent, which is dissolved in the liquid sample and said particles,

wherein said reagent includes a specific binding substance capable of specifically binding with an analyte in said liquid sample,

an electric charge of the surface of said particles and an electric charge of said specific binding substance have a negative polarity in said liquid mixture,

the method further comprises the following step between step (A) and step (B):
a step of adjusting pH in said liquid mixture to be a pH of more than the isoelectric point pI of the reagent.

22. (New) The stirring method in accordance with claim 20, wherein the flow of said liquid sample in said step (B) is a flow circulating along the inner face of the wall of said liquid sample retaining section.

23. (New) The stirring method in accordance with claim 21, wherein said reagent is antibody.

24. (New) The stirring method in accordance with claim 21, wherein each surface of said plurality of particles comprises sulfonic acid groups or carboxyl groups.

25. (New) The stirring method in accordance with claim 23, wherein each surface of said plurality of particles comprises sulfonic acid groups or carboxyl groups.